

READY MADE CRITICS OF OLD

Amused by the Pretensions of Byron, Wadsworth and Tennyson.

SHELLY'S WORK A SEALED BOOK

The icy Reception Given the Early Efforts of the Men Who Lived to See Themselves World Famous and Their Scornful Critics Chagrined.

With the poems of the youthful Byron the Edinburgh reviewer made fine sport, little dreaming he had caught a Tartar in the presumably foolish young lordling. In cutting up the "Hours of Idleness" the critic was better justified than upon other occasions when he used the knife. Still it is just as well that Byron did not take to heart the advice to forthwith abandon poetry and turn his talents and opportunities to better account. The sting contained in the remark that "the poetry of this young lord belongs to the class which neither the gods nor men are said to permit" was returned with interest in the lines:

A man must serve his time to every trade
Save censure; critics are all ready made.

And again:
Believe a woman or an epithet
Or either thing that's false before
You trust in critics, who themselves are sore.

The appearance of a volume of poems by Wordsworth in 1807 was the signal for a savage onslaught in The Edinburgh. The peculiarities of diction of the disciples of the new school of poetry were enough, in the critic's opinion, to render them ridiculous, but Mr. Wordsworth, he added, "really seems anxious to court this literary martyrdom by advice still more infallible—we mean that of connecting his most lofty, tender or impassioned conceptions with objects and incidents which the greater part of his readers will probably persist in thinking low, silly or uninteresting." After denying to Wordsworth any pretensions to elegance, dignity or correctness of versification the reviewer concludes with the following significant passage: "We venture to hope that there is now an end of this folly, and that, like other follies, it will be found to have cured itself by the extravagance resulting from its unbridled indulgence, and we think there is reason to hope that the lamentable consequences which have resulted from Mr. Wordsworth's open violation of the established laws of poetry will operate as a wholesome warning to those who might otherwise have been seduced by his example and be the means of restoring to that ancient and venerable code its due honor and authority."

Immortality apart, the reviewers appear to have been totally unable to comprehend Shelley's poetry, the beauties of which seemed to them but the tricks of a "poetical harlequin." In the critique on "Prometheus Unbound" and other poems that appeared in The Quarterly in 1821, the writer complains that the predominating characteristic of Mr. Shelley's poetry is its frequent and total want of meaning and declares his inability to discover the "object" of the poem called "A Sensitive Plant." He is astonished that such a volume should meet with readers and admirers, until he recollects the numerous congregations which the incoherencies of the itinerant Methodist preacher attract and concludes: "Poetical power can only be shown by writing good poetry, and this Mr. Shelley has not yet done. Take away from him the unintelligible, the confused, the incoherent, the bombastic, the affected, the extravagant, the hideously gorgeous and 'Prometheus' and the poems which accompany it will sink at once into nothingness."

Tennyson's volume of poems which appeared in 1833 met with the usual reception from the critics, whose custom it was to "heave half a brick" at the poetical stranger. The Quarterly, incorrigible as ever, though professing to be warmed by former mishaps, begins in a tone of labored sarcasm: "We gladly seize the opportunity of introducing to the notice of our more sequestered readers a prodigy of genius, another and a brighter star of that galaxy or milky way of poetry of which the lamented Keats was the harbinger, and let us take this occasion to sing our psalmode on the subject of 'Endymion.' We certainly did not discover in that poem the same degree of merit that its more clear sighted and prophetic admirers did. Warned by our former mishaps, wiser by experience and improved, we hope, in taste, we have to offer to Mr. Tennyson our tribute of unmingled praise." This tribute consists of several pages of critical horseplay at the expense of such poems as the "Hesperides," "Enone" and the "Dream of Fair Women."—Cornhill Magazine.

A Remarkable Memory.

George W. McMillon of Friar's Hill, Greenbrier county, W. Va., is about 40 years old and has the gift of remembrance wonderfully developed. He remembers everything he ever knew or read. He can, offhand, recite the names, birthdays, hour of death, majorities and the closest details of the lives of all the presidents in regular order, can recite poems of 3,000 words without missing a word, can recount the details of every visit he has made in his life, can name all the persons he has met in two weeks and every word every one of them said and can quote chapter after chapter of the Bible. One of his most interesting feats is the repetition of every word of a marriage ceremony which he heard when he was 21, and which united a girl who was his sweetheart to another

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man. It is said that this ceremony was the first thing he ever tried to remember.—Philadelphia Press.

Which Dies First When They Die Together?

The Russian courts have reversed the assumption of the American tribunals that when a husband and wife are drowned in the same disaster the wife dies first. The Russian doctors have testified unanimously that the man would be the first to die, because the woman is more agile and keeps herself longer above water.

The Hub Will Benefit Everybody.

How to Make Pineapple Vinegar.

Pineapple vinegar is the latest Florida product. Its color resembles that of amber, and it is as clear as sherry wine. Its odor is delightful and refreshing, and its flavor is unparalleled by any other vinegar. It cannot readily be described, but if once tasted it is not easily forgotten, and those who have sampled it pronounce it delicious and unequalled by anything of the kind that has ever been tested. It is entirely free from adulteration; it is nothing but the pure juice of pineapples converted into pure vinegar.

The Hub Will Benefit Everybody.

When They Wrote Their Books.

A broader experience is needed to compose a full grown novel than to sketch a short story, and the great novelists have often essayed their first elaborate fictions when no longer young. Scott was more than 40 when he published the first of the Waverley novels, Thackeray was not far from 40 when "Vanity Fair" was finished, George Eliot was almost 40 when "Adam Bede" appeared, and Hawthorne was 46 when he sent forth "The Scarlet Letter" in 1850.—Brander Matthews in St. Nicholas.

The Hub Will Benefit Everybody.

New side combs of shell have scalloped edges. These edges are finished with small stones, which spread out as an ornament and perhaps terminating in a single pearl.

An entire set of tablespoons, with the edges beaded and meeting at the top in a little fan shaped ornament, are altogether a new design and exceedingly pretty.—Jewelers' Circular.

The Hub Will Benefit Everybody.

Miss Bessie Davis, the bright young register in chancery for Limestone county, Ala., has been reappointed by Judge W. H. Simpson.

The New Jersey assembly has passed a bill making women eligible to attorney and counselor examinations and licenses.

Mrs. Charles Henriotin will remain east in the interest of the Federation of Clubs until the last of April.

Frances Willard sailed for England with Lady Henry Somerset March 6.

IT'S A MILLSTONE



About a young man's back to be a sufferer from nervous exhaustion, nervous debility, impaired memory, low spirits, irritable temper, and the thousand and one derangements of mind and body that result from unnatural, pernicious habits, contracted through ignorance. Such habits wreck the constitution, result in loss of manly power, and sometimes in dread insanity. To reach, reclaim and restore such unfortunate to health and happiness, is the aim of the publishers of a book written in plain but chaste language, on the nature, symptoms and curability, by home treatment, of such diseases. This book will be sent sealed, in plain envelope, on receipt of ten cents in stamps, for postage. Address, World's Dispensary Medical Association, Buffalo, N. Y.

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